AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-4 (cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) A polishing apparatus for polishing a semiconductor wafer, comprising:

a processing section for polishing and cleaning a semiconductor wafer;

a receiving section for supplying a semiconductor wafer to be polished to said processing section and receiving a polished and cleaned semiconductor wafer; and

a positioning mechanism for aligning a reference position of the polished and cleaned semiconductor wafer with a predetermined direction ~~so that while the semiconductor wafer is transported between said processing section and said receiving section the semiconductor wafer is of a predetermined orientation~~.

6. (Original) The polishing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said positioning mechanism is disposed in a clean chamber disposed between said processing section and said receiving section, with said clean chamber including a partition with a shutter which separates said processing section from said receiving section.

7. (Original) The polishing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a rotating mechanism for holding and rotating the semiconductor wafer, and a sensor for detecting the reference position of the semiconductor wafer, such that the reference position of the semiconductor wafer can be aligned with the predetermined direction by using an output from said sensor and causing said rotating mechanism to rotate the semiconductor wafer.

Claims 8-12 (cancelled)

13. (Original) A polishing method for polishing a semiconductor wafer, comprising;

supplying a semiconductor wafer from a receiving section to a processing section;

polishing said semiconductor wafer in said processing section;

cleaning said polished semiconductor wafer;

aligning a reference position of said polished and cleaned semiconductor wafer with a predetermined direction; and

returning said polished and cleaned semiconductor wafer to said receiving section.

14. (New) The polishing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said positioning mechanism has a receiving member for receiving said semiconductor wafer, a motor for rotating said receiving member and a home-position confirming sensor for confirming a home position of said motor.

15. (New) A processing apparatus for processing a semiconductor wafer, comprising:

a processing section for processing a semiconductor wafer;

a receiving section for supplying a semiconductor wafer to be processed to said processing section and receiving a processed semiconductor wafer; and

a positioning mechanism for aligning a reference position of the processed semiconductor wafer with a predetermined direction.

16. (New) A processing apparatus for processing a semiconductor wafer, comprising:

a processing section for processing a semiconductor wafer;

a receiving section for supplying a semiconductor wafer to be processed to said processing section and receiving a processed semiconductor wafer; and

a positioning mechanism for aligning a reference position of the processed semiconductor wafer with a predetermined direction,

wherein said positioning mechanism has a receiving member for receiving said semiconductor wafer, a motor for rotating said receiving member and a home-position confirming sensor for confirming a home position of said motor.

17. (New) The processing apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said positioning mechanism aligns the reference position of the processed semiconductor wafer.

18. (New) The processing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said positioning mechanism has a detecting sensor for detecting the reference position of the processed semiconductor wafer so as to output a signal for stopping rotation of said motor.